

Postsecondary Education Rigor Analysis RFP
Prospective Bidder Questions and Responses

1. a. Does the Postsecondary Rigor Analysis Committee have a budgeted amount for this project or a range of costs that they are expecting proposal to fall within?
Answer: No
b. The scope for this project is broad and the timeline is relatively short. Is it possible to provide an anticipated budget range for this project to help frame the breadth and depth of the analyses?
Answer: Vendors may wish to provide a budget range for any or all of the materials and services the vendor proposes to provide, differentiating deliverables based on breadth and depth of the analyses if appropriate.
2. Is there a preferred page limit to the proposal?
Answer: No
3. Of the issues identified by the committee in the RFP, are there any items that are of a higher priority? In particular, are issues related to dual/concurrent enrollment more or less important than the analysis of transfer and articulation between community colleges and four-year institutions?
Answer: No
4. In section II. Scope of Services A. Analysis of Specifics item b. the RFP asks for the potential costs of instituting any proposed or identified action. Are you interested in an analysis of cost and/or savings of various approaches for the state, institutions, students or all of the above?
Answer: Yes
5. Is the committee interested in an analysis of retention, time to degree and graduation rates for students who have enrolled in concurrent/dual enrollment courses?
Answer: Those issues are related and would be of interest to the Study Committee.
6. Are there particular approaches to transfer and articulation that the committee is most interested in learning more about (eg. Common Course Numbering, state vs. institutional policies, etc.)
Answer: The Study Committee is interested in proven approaches that have resulted in the seamless transition of students from community colleges to Regents universities. The recent establishment of the web page, www.transferiniowa.org, advances the state toward this goal, but one of the purposes of the study is to identify any other steps or improvements that can be taken or made to reach that goal.
7. On page 2 of the RFP, Section I. Introduction – General Information, A. Legislative Background, provides the legislative act that directs the Legislative Council to commission a study to evaluate and compare the rigor of the first two years of study at community colleges and Regents universities; however, it does

not offer any discussion about the issues that led to the legislative act. Please provide a brief overview of the issues that led to this RFP.

Answer: The Iowa General Assembly provides a history of a bill's movement from introduction to enactment, and bill requests submitted by state departments include a background statement, while study bills and individually sponsored bills contain an explanation. Documentation of discussions of the issues leading to a legislative Act is not provided by the Iowa General Assembly. The language in HF 2679 providing for this study was offered as an amendment, H-8492, by Representative Jeff Kaufmann.

8. On page 5 of the RFP, *Section II. Scope of Services, C. Progress and Final Report Requirements*, number 2 states that the “consultant shall submit 25 printed copies of each of the two written progress reports and 150 printed copies of the final report.” In order to keep the costs of the copies as economical as possible for the General Assembly, are black and white copies acceptable? Or should the proposal identify the cost of black and white copies versus color copies?

Answer: Use of color printing is at the discretion of the consultant. However, as stated in the RFP, the consultant shall submit a printed version and one uncompressed electronic version drafted in Microsoft Word® or a similar word processing program for each of the two written progress reports, in-person report presentation materials, and the final report that are required to be submitted to the Committee. If color is used in any of the reports, the color shall be used in a manner capable of being reproduced and easily read in a black and white format. It is anticipated that each report will be posted on the Iowa General Assembly's Internet site.

For answers to questions 9 through 14, please address inquiries to the appropriate contact person from the list attached below:

9. Will the project have access to transcript level data from all community colleges and four-year institutions in Iowa?
10. Is there a common identifier in the transcript level data that will allow the project to track students between institutions?
11. Will there be privacy issues that will prevent the tracking of students from the community colleges to the four-year institutions?
12. Will the project have access to postsecondary course syllabi at both community colleges and four-year institutions in Iowa?
13. Will the project have access to credentials for community college, four-year institution and concurrent/dual enrollment faculty?
14. On page 4 of the RFP, *Section II. Scope of Services, A. Analysis Specifics*, number 5 states that “the consultant shall utilize Iowa data available from community colleges, the state Department of Education, and the State Board of Regents.”
 - a. Are individual level data related to faculty educational credentials and the courses they teach available at the state level and/or at the institution level for community colleges and for the Regents universities?

- b. Are student level data available at the state level and/or at the institution level for community colleges and for the Regents universities?
- c. Do data elements exist in the Regents universities' databases that indicate
 - Whether a student is a lower or upper level student?
 - Whether a student is a transfer or native student?
 - The type of transfer student (e.g., AA completed, vocational degree or certificate, courses without degree completion)?

Contacts for Questions 9 through 14:

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